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Agenda item 74 (a)
Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 13 February 2015 from the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to the President of the General Assembly

Pursuant to paragraph 80 of General Assembly resolution 60/30, we were reappointed as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, which was established pursuant to paragraph 73 of General Assembly resolution 59/24. In accordance with paragraphs 199 and 200 of General Assembly resolution 68/70, the Working Group met from 20 to 23 January 2015.

We are pleased to inform you that the Working Group has fulfilled its mandate to provide recommendations to the General Assembly, as requested in paragraph 214 of resolution 69/245. We have the honour to submit to you the outcome of the meeting, consisting of recommendations adopted by consensus by the Working Group and a Co-Chairs' summary of discussions at the meeting (see annex).

It would be appreciated if the present letter and the annex thereto could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 74 (a).

(*Signed*) Palitha T. B. **Kohona**
(*Signed*) Liesbeth **Lijnzaad**
Co-Chairs

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Annex

Outcome of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and Co-Chairs' summary of discussions

I. Recommendations

1. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction recommends to the General Assembly that it:

(a) Reaffirm the commitment made by Heads of State and Government in paragraph 162 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want" and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, to address, on an urgent basis, building on the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group, the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, including by taking a decision on the development of an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, before the end of the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly;

(b) Note its request to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to make recommendations on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the Convention contained in paragraph 214 of resolution 69/245;

(c) Welcome the exchange of views on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the Convention and the progress made within the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group, within its mandate established by resolution 66/231 and in the light of resolution 67/78, to prepare for the decision on the development of an international instrument under the Convention to be taken at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

(d) Stress the need for the comprehensive global regime to better address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, having considered the feasibility of developing an international instrument under the Convention;

(e) Decide to develop an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction and to that end:

(i) Prior to holding an intergovernmental conference, decide to establish a preparatory committee, open to all States Members of the United Nations, members of specialized agencies and parties to the Convention, with others invited as observers in accordance with past practice of the United Nations, to make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention, taking into account the various reports of the Co-Chairs on the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group, the preparatory

committee starting its work in 2016 and, by the end of 2017, reporting to the Assembly on its progress;

(ii) Before the end of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, and taking into account the aforementioned report of the preparatory committee, decide on the convening and on the starting date of an intergovernmental conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the preparatory committee on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention;

(f) Decide that negotiations shall address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology;

(g) Recognize that the process indicated in subparagraph (e) above should not undermine existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies;

(h) Also recognize that neither participation in the negotiations nor their outcome may affect the legal status of non-parties to the Convention or any other related agreements with regard to those instruments, or the legal status of parties to the Convention or any other related agreements with regard to those instruments.

II. Co-Chairs' summary of discussions*

2. In paragraph 198 of its resolution 68/70, the General Assembly requested the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, within its mandate established by resolution 66/231 and in the light of resolution 67/78, and in order to prepare for the decision to be taken at the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly, to make recommendations to the Assembly on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. To that end, the Assembly decided that the Working Group should meet for three meetings of four days each, with the possibility of the Assembly deciding that additional meetings would be held, if needed, within existing resources.

3. The first and second of those meetings of the Working Group were held at United Nations Headquarters from 1 to 4 April 2014[a] and from 16 to 19 June 2014,[b] respectively, in accordance with paragraphs 199 and 200 of resolution 68/70. The third meeting was held at United Nations Headquarters from 20 to 23 January 2015, in accordance with paragraphs 199 and 200 of resolution 68/70 and paragraph 214 of resolution 69/245.

* The summary is intended for reference purposes only.

[a] See A/69/82.

[b] See A/69/177.

4. The meeting of the Working Group was presided over by two Co-Chairs, Palitha T. B. Kohona (Sri Lanka) and Liesbeth Lijnzaad (Netherlands), appointed by the President of the General Assembly in consultation with Member States.

5. The Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, the Legal Counsel, Miguel de Serpa Soares, delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Secretary-General.

6. Representatives of 104 Member States, 2 non-Member States, 17 intergovernmental organizations and other bodies and 11 non-governmental organizations attended the meeting of the Working Group.

7. The Working Group adopted the agenda (A/AC.276/11) without amendment http://undocs.org/A/AC.276/9 and agreed to proceed on the basis of the proposed format and annotated agenda and organization of work (A/AC.276/L.16).

8. Following informal consultations, on 23 January 2015 the plenary of the Working Group adopted the recommendations contained in section I above by consensus. The delegations of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Colombia made statements explaining their position after the adoption of the recommendations (see para. 33).

9. In accordance with the format and at the request of the Working Group, the Co-Chairs prepared the present brief summary of discussions on key issues, ideas and proposals referred to or raised during the deliberations. The general considerations made during the meeting are reflected in paragraphs 10 to 25 below. Comments of a general nature made in the context of the consideration of draft recommendations to the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly are reflected in paragraphs 26 to 34.

General considerations, including on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

10. Delegations recalled the importance and urgency of addressing the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Several delegations observed that addressing the issue would also address sustainable development issues, in particular food security and poverty alleviation. Some delegations highlighted, in particular, that oceans were the foundation of small island developing States' economies, environment and societies and that, in recent years, accumulating and compounding human impacts had undermined the health of the oceans, thereby gravely threatening the well-being and livelihood of those States' populations. In that context, marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction was considered of critical importance, owing to its shared, transboundary nature and its interconnectedness to coastal ecosystems. It was noted that national and regional efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity could be jeopardized by the challenges posed by activities beyond areas of national jurisdiction. The delegations called for strengthened cooperation and coordination among all sectors and at all levels. Several delegations expressed the view that a global universal governance structure remained the best way to promote sustainable marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

11. Delegations recalled paragraph 162 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex), in which States committed to address, on an urgent

basis, building on the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group and before the end of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, including by taking a decision on the development of an international instrument under the Convention on the Law of the Sea. Many delegations welcomed the progress made at the meetings of the Working Group held in April and June 2014.

12. Many delegations reiterated that the status quo was not acceptable and considered that there was growing momentum to recommend to the General Assembly that it decide to launch negotiations to develop an international instrument under the Convention. They considered that the elaboration of such an instrument was feasible from a political, legal and technical standpoint. In their view, the instrument would have to be negotiated on the basis of, and address, the package of issues agreed upon in 2011 in resolution 66/231, namely marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, and environmental impact assessments, capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology. Many delegations supported negotiating such an instrument as a legally binding agreement under the Convention. Several delegations underlined that a third implementing agreement to the Convention would respond to the urgent need to depart from the status quo and bring added value to the present legal regime for oceans and seas by moving from sectoral and fragmented approaches to a global and more coherent approach. Such an agreement, several delegations noted, would implement, strengthen and elaborate on a number of obligations already embodied in the Convention without altering the existing legal order established therein. Several delegations also pointed out that an agreement would reduce existing governance gaps by providing a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. A view was expressed that such a regime would ensure predictability and uniformity in the conduct of States. It was emphasized that the response to the challenge of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction could not be left to unilateral action or to organizations with limited participation and that common goods could not be appropriated by or left to the exclusive administration of a few which did not represent the interests of the international community.

13. Some delegations stated that discussions had not been exhausted on the way forward to address issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and that some questions still needed to be addressed. It was observed that the status quo was mainly due to limited political will to implement existing instruments, which did not constitute a legal gap but one of implementation that would not be addressed by adopting a new instrument. Some delegations observed that focusing on the effective implementation and enforcement of existing legally binding instruments would better ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. In that regard, given the need to tackle issues on an urgent basis and the significant resources and efforts required to negotiate a new instrument, preference was expressed for focusing on ways to strengthen the implementation of existing instruments.

14. Some delegations expressed concern about negotiating a new legally binding agreement without a clear understanding of what it would cover. It was noted that

while there was some clarity on the breadth of questions involved, there was insufficient clarity on possible answers. The view was also expressed that the package agreed in 2011 was no more than a description of major topics to be addressed, which did not specify which activities would be covered by a new instrument or clarify that a new instrument would not prejudice the rights, duties and interests of States or diminish authorities or mandates under existing international law.

15. Several delegations highlighted the need to complement, respect and avoid duplication with existing instruments, in particular the Convention. Some delegations stressed the need to take into account ongoing activities. Several delegations suggested that the future arrangement should build on the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1992 and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, as well as other relevant treaties, to provide a uniform regime for biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

16. The need to take into account the relevant general principles of international law and the rights and duties enshrined in international legal instruments, in particular the Convention, such as the principle of the common heritage of mankind and the freedom of the high seas, was emphasized by several delegations. Some delegations reaffirmed the importance of preserving the balance of interests, rights and obligations enshrined in the Convention and between competing uses of the oceans and conservation and sustainable use objectives. It was emphasized that, should negotiations be launched, any discussions and resulting instrument should focus on cooperation and collaboration between institutions and ensuring a functioning relationship between the different activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, not on managing those activities.

17. Many delegations noted with concern the absence of a comprehensive global regime to address the legal gaps relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Other delegations drew attention to the fact that a number of existing instruments were applicable. A view was expressed that the focus of any new agreement should therefore be on issues where there were shortcomings or gaps in the current framework. In that regard, it was noted that while legal gaps could be addressed in the context of a new agreement, such gaps had yet to be specifically identified.

18. Several delegations underlined the existence of a legal gap concerning access to, and benefit sharing from, marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction. In the view of several delegations, those resources were the common heritage of mankind, in accordance with resolution 2749 (XXV). They noted that those resources were currently being exploited without the concomitant obligation to share the benefits derived therefrom and that a specific legal regime needed to be developed to implement the common heritage of mankind, taking into account the interests and needs of developing countries, including States non-parties to the Convention. It was highlighted that marine genetic resources beyond areas of national jurisdiction could not be subject to unilateral access and use.

19. It was suggested that the scope of a new instrument should encompass all marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction currently known or

discovered at any time in the future. In that regard, while support was expressed for the inclusion of fisheries in a new instrument, taking into account the work of existing regional fisheries management organizations, other delegations observed that fisheries in the high seas were already regulated under the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement and should therefore not be included in the scope of such an instrument.

20. The importance of not deterring scientific research was emphasized, given that research on marine genetic resources was a relatively new and quickly evolving field and that innovation could be hampered by cumbersome and excessively bureaucratic procedures. It was reaffirmed that intellectual property rights issues should be addressed within the competent forums, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization.

21. The need to enhance scientific understanding of areas beyond national jurisdiction was considered a priority, as was the need for sound science to inform decision-making. It was noted that the transfer of technology must be compatible with existing frameworks, including those under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

22. Several delegations noted that a legally binding agreement should incorporate widely accepted principles of ocean governance, such as the precautionary principle, integrated ocean management and an ecosystem approach. A view was expressed that it would not be appropriate to use a "one size fits all" approach for every activity in all regions, as impacts vary across sectors and regions, based on particular circumstances and characteristics. It was observed, with particular reference to transboundary environmental impact assessments, that care should be exercised in applying to marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction approaches developed in the context of planned activities within the jurisdiction or control of States.

23. Several delegations suggested that an agreement should establish institutional mechanisms to assist parties in implementing their obligations. They expressed the view that the mandate of the International Seabed Authority could be expanded to oversee the implementation of a future agreement under the Convention. Other delegations observed that the Authority could serve as a model for any institution developed under a new agreement. A view was expressed that new structures or institutions should be established only if considered necessary.

24. The need to take into account the views of all stakeholders was emphasized. In particular, it was suggested that civil society, international organizations and industry associations that had an interest in activities that could be affected by any future instrument should be invited to engage and contribute their views and expertise.

25. Some delegations underscored that any new agreement should be open to all States, whether parties or non-parties to the Convention. Several delegations stressed that accession to an implementing agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction under the Convention should not prejudge accession thereto of States non-parties. Some delegations indicated that acceding to such an agreement would not imply acceptance of any legal obligations arising from instruments that had not been explicitly accepted by States non-parties. In that regard, some delegations expressed the view that issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine

biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction should be regulated under an international instrument other than the Convention on the Law of the Sea, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, or as an addition to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was also suggested that the criteria and principles enshrined in various existing instruments could be adapted to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, bearing in mind the principles of responsibility, cooperation, equality and sustainability.

Consideration and adoption of draft recommendations to the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly

26. The Co-Chairs presented a non-paper dated 17 December 2014, which contained draft elements of recommendations to the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly and had been prepared upon the request of delegations at the meeting of the Working Group held in June 2014. The Co-Chairs explained that the non-paper was a compilation of the elements submitted by delegations in response to their letter dated 8 July 2014, with a view to facilitating the development of draft recommendations. They noted that it was not envisaged that the non-paper would constitute the basis for negotiations on the draft recommendations, especially since the elements contained therein did not purport to reflect consensual elements. Delegations expressed their appreciation to the Co-Chairs for preparing the non-paper, which they considered to constitute a good basis for elaborating draft recommendations.

27. Many delegations expressed support for recommendations to launch a negotiating process for an international legally binding agreement. It was observed that, under the mandate of the Working Group, including the mandate established by resolution 66/231, and taking into account the commitment made by States in paragraph 162 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", the option of addressing issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction through the implementation of existing instruments was still available.

28. With regard to the possible content of an international instrument, many delegations expressed the view that the draft recommendations should reflect consensual elements only, highlighting in particular the package agreed in 2011, without touching upon issues that were still under discussion. A view was expressed that the package was not robust enough to constitute the basis for negotiations of a new instrument.

29. Several delegations stressed that the recommendations should include a reference to the need to recognize, respect and complement the competence and mandates of existing global and regional organizations and frameworks and to foster and strengthen cooperation and coordination between existing bodies. It was proposed that the recommendations include recognition of the primary role of the Convention and its principles, such as freedom of the high seas and the common heritage of mankind. A suggestion was made that the recommendations could include such parameters as taking a practical approach, cost-effectiveness, adequate financial incentives and the use of existing frameworks to avoid unnecessary costs.

Other delegations cautioned against engaging in de facto treaty negotiation before formal negotiations for an international instrument under the Convention had actually commenced, as many issues would need to be resolved during such negotiations.

30. With regard to the next stage of the process, many delegations called for the recommendations to include the convening of an intergovernmental conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the mandate to negotiate an implementing agreement under the Convention and to address, in particular, together and as a whole, the package of issues agreed in 2011. Several delegations suggested that the intergovernmental conference should be convened as soon as possible and should complete its work within an agreed deadline. Some delegations suggested that the resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly could set the timeline for negotiations. Highlighting the complexity of the issues, a delegation stated that it would not be appropriate to pre-set a timetable for negotiations at that stage.

31. Many delegations expressed the view that convening a preparatory process with the mandate of making recommendations to an intergovernmental conference could be useful. A view was expressed that the most important task of the preparatory committee should be to determine specifically those areas for which a new agreement was necessary and those where it would be sufficient to strengthen cooperation under existing instruments. In that regard, it was observed that the discussions in the Working Group had been very rich and that the preparatory process should draw upon and benefit from this work. The view was expressed that the recommendations of the Working Group should be specific enough to provide guidance and framing to the preparatory process, without going into the detail of what needed to be negotiated.

32. Many delegations observed that the preparatory process should be open to all States Members of the United Nations, as well as to parties to the Convention. The need to ensure that the negotiations were inclusive and transparent was also underscored.

33. Following informal consultations, which were conducted on the basis that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed", the Working Group adopted the recommendations included in section I above by consensus. The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela indicated that, because it was not a party to the Convention, the norms of the Convention, including those characterized as customary law, were not applicable to it, except for those that it had expressly recognized. It was also stated that a lack of objection to the recommendations adopted at the meeting could not be interpreted as a change in position of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with regard to the Convention and its role in the framework of a future legal regime for marine resources beyond national jurisdiction. The delegation of Colombia indicated that it had joined the consensus on the understanding that this support did not imply acceptance by Colombia of the provisions or the obligations contained in the Convention, to which it was not a party. The delegation stressed that under no circumstances could it be inferred that the Convention or any other international instrument related to the recommendations were applicable or opposable to Colombia.

34. Delegations expressed appreciation to the Co-Chairs for their leadership and guidance since 2010. They also thanked the Secretariat.

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Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2014

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides additional information in response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period ended 30 June 2014 (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II). The report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 48/216 B, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly, at the same time as the Board of Auditors submitted its recommendations to the Assembly, on measures taken or to be taken to implement those recommendations.

The Administration has concurred with most of the Board's recommendations and many of the Administration's comments have been duly reflected in the report of the Board. The present report provides additional comments from the Administration, where appropriate, and information on the status of implementation, the department responsible, the estimated completion date and the priority for each recommendation contained in the report of the Board. In addition, the present report contains updated information on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board relating to the prior period that were reported by the Board, in annex II to its report, as not having been fully implemented.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 48/216 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the measures that would be taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors at the same time as the report of the Board was submitted to the Assembly. Accordingly, the present report is submitted in response to the recommendations of the Board contained in its report on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period ended 30 June 2014 (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

2. In preparing the present report, account was taken of the provisions of the following documents:

(a) General Assembly resolution 52/212 B, in particular paragraphs 2 to 5 thereof, and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the proposals of the Board for improving the implementation of its recommendations approved by the Assembly (A/52/753, annex);

(b) Paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 68/19 B, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to indicate an expected time frame for the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and the priorities for their implementation, including the office holders to be held accountable and measures taken in that regard;

(c) Paragraph 11 of the report of the Advisory Committee Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/69/386), in which the Advisory Committee indicated that it considered that further details in terms of the recommendations of the Board that had not been accepted, including a summarized explanation of the reasons for non-acceptance, should be provided.

3. With regard to prioritization, the Administration noted that the Board had categorized 22 of the 63 recommendations as "main" recommendations. While all accepted recommendations of the Board will be implemented in a timely manner, the main recommendations will be considered to be of the highest priority.

4. The Administration is pleased to note that the Board has reported that there was an increase of 8 per cent in the rate of implementation of its recommendations, from 43 per cent in the 2011/12 financial period to 51 per cent in the 2012/13 financial period.

5. In tables 1 and 2, the status of implementation of newly issued recommendations as at February 2015 is summarized.

Table 1
Status of implementation of main recommendations as at February 2015

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented/ closure requested*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support	17	–	2	15	12	3
Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support and Department of Management	2	–	–	2	2	–
Department of Management	3	1	1	1	1	–
Total	**22**	**1**	**3**	**18**	**15**	**3**

6. As indicated in table 1, of the 22 main recommendations issued by the Board, 1 has not been accepted, 3 have been implemented or closure has been requested and 18 are in progress. Of the 18 main recommendations in progress, 14 are targeted for implementation in 2015 and 1 is due for implementation in 2016. No target dates have been set for three recommendations that pertain to ongoing activities.

Table 2
Status of implementation of all recommendations as at February 2015

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented/ closure requested*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support	51	–	14	37	31	6
Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support and Department of Management	5	–	–	5	5	–
Department of Management	7	2	3	2	2	–
Total	**63**	**2**	**17**	**44**	**38**	**6**

7. As indicated in table 2, of the 63 recommendations issued by the Board, 2 have not been accepted, 17 have been implemented or closure has been requested, and 44 are in progress. Of the 44 recommendations in progress, 36 are targeted for implementation before the end of 2015 and 2 are due for implementation in 2016. The six recommendations for which no target dates have been set pertain to ongoing activities.

8. The Administration did not accept two of the Board's recommendations that proposed strengthening the role of the committees on contracts and amending the United Nations Procurement Manual accordingly. The Administration notes that the committees on contracts are set up to provide advisory services to the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services, who has the delegated authority for procurement matters. In addition, the Procurement Division actively reviews the provisions of the Procurement Manual and, in the Administration's opinion, the

Procurement Manual clearly outlines the requirements for submission of cases to committees on contracts. Therefore, no amendment is required in this regard.

II. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors

9. The information requested by the General Assembly on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors for the financial period ended 30 June 2014 (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II) is set out below. As indicated in the summary of the present report, most of the Administration's comments have already been included in the report of the Board. Accordingly, additional comments are provided only where deemed necessary.

A. Implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards

10. **In paragraph 20 of its report, the Board recommended that, in order to enhance the transparency and utility of the financial statements for all stakeholders, the Administration: (a) state the significant accounting policy for the contingent contracted services; (b) provide expenditure figures by budget line items in annex II to the financial statements to facilitate enhanced appreciation of the expenditure incurred; and (c) review the useful lives of assets to be applied prospectively.**

11. The Administration has committed to developing more detailed disclosures in the note on contingent contracted services and to reviewing the useful lives of assets as part of the preparation process for the 2015 financial statements. An appropriate level of disclosure for budget expenditures will also be considered.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

12. **In paragraph 25 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen internal controls and checks and maintain close monitoring of the accounting process and the preparation of financial packages, including the trial balance, at the missions so as to enhance the accuracy of the financial statements.**

13. The Administration has taken specific actions to strengthen internal controls, including weekly monitoring of open items and unusual general ledger balances and the deployment of a monthly reporting toolkit to tighten internal controls at the mission level. To support the preparation process for the 2015 financial statements, a workshop is being planned to provide more structured guidance, including lessons learned during the 2014 audit.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

B. Budget formulation and management

14. **In paragraph 33 of the report, the Board recommended that: (a) efforts be intensified to make the budget as realistic as possible so that it can be used as an effective instrument of expenditure control; and (b) the oversight of the budget steering and sub-steering committees be strengthened so that situations of over- or underbudgeting are avoided.**

15. The Administration would like to reiterate that budgets are based on the best available information at the time of their preparation, well in advance of the budget implementation period. Budgets are plans that contain forecast financial requirements based on a number of assumptions. In this context, recognizing the highly volatile operational environment in which most of the peacekeeping missions are deployed, it is normal for variances to occur between the approved budget and its actual implementation. These variances are reported to the General Assembly in budget performance reports, which become important reference documents during the formulation and review of subsequent budgets.

16. In overall terms, peacekeeping operations achieved a 97 per cent budget utilization rate in the 2013/14 financial period, which is an indication of a robust monitoring process and budgetary discipline. Regarding part (b) of the recommendation, there is no corresponding finding in the Board's report and, as a result, the Administration is unable to comment on it.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not Applicable

17. **In paragraph 39 of its report, the Board recommended that mission chiefs exercise greater vigilance and control over budget variations and that redeployments be permitted only with full justification.**

18. The Administration reiterates that the redeployments between groups and classes are explained by the missions' volatile operational environments and significant changes in mandates. As previously indicated to the Board, redeployments across groups and classes are an essential feature of allotment management to provide missions with the required flexibility to deliver on their mandates. Accordingly, the redeployment of funds is not an indication of any deficiency in either financial monitoring or control, but rather is a sign that a mission is proactively meeting the shifting priorities of operational requirements in response to both internal and external factors. Closure of this recommendation is requested, as there was no finding by the Board that redeployments were unjustified and unapproved.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not Applicable

19. **In paragraph 54 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration review the methodology adopted to ensure more realistic budgetary projections.**

20. The Administration issues comprehensive guidance on budgeting for major consumables as part of the budget instruction package circulated to all peacekeeping missions. The guidance is updated every year to account for price changes related to contractual costs, consumption patterns or new budgeting parameters for more realistic budgeting.

21. The guidance package is intended to provide, to the extent possible, a standard approach to budget parameters based on the collective experience of missions, and to support a budget formulation approach where historical trends may not be an adequate indicator for resource planning. In the course of budget formulation, it is accepted practice for missions to review their recent historical trends of consumption and budget accordingly.

22. Missions also establish their own consumption baseline by ensuring that an accurate representation of costs is provided in the budget proposals, supported in part by the guidance package issued by Headquarters when historical trends are not available or uncertain.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not Applicable

C. Travel management

23. **In paragraph 59 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration review the actual requirements for official travel and take steps to strengthen budget planning of official travel at the mission level in order to ensure optimum allocation and utilization of resources.**

24. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 60 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

25. **In paragraph 64 of the report, the Board recommended that: (a) the Administration take effective steps to enforce and monitor compliance with the advance purchase policy by staff and missions; and (b) the Regional Service Centre review the reasons for non-compliance with the administrative instruction on official travel and identify areas for improvement, including streamlining and monitoring of the granting of approval for travel claims.**

26. The Regional Service Centre has established monthly key performance indicators to track the implementation of the 16-day policy on the issuance of tickets and to enforce this rule, with exceptions duly documented, justified and

approved. The Administration's additional comments are reflected in paragraph 65 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

27. **In paragraph 70 of the report, the Board recommended that: (a) the format of the travel request forms being used by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support be revised to include certification by the programme manager in accordance with the extant instructions; and (b) the issuance of such certificates be insisted upon before the granting of approval for the proposed travel.**

28. The Administration has revised the format of the request for travel authorization forms as recommended by the Board.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

29. **In paragraph 77 of its report, the Board recommended that the missions, together with the Regional Service Centre, closely monitor the adjustment of travel advances and ensure timely action for adjustment/recovery. Guidelines may be issued detailing the respective responsibilities of the mission and the Regional Service Centre and ensuring that separation benefits are granted only after no dues certificates have been received from the sections concerned.**

30. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 78 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

31. **In paragraph 81 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration review the ticketing arrangements that may have been entered into by missions with travel firms so as to ensure that discounts are uniformly obtained, thus avoiding unnecessary expenditure.**

32. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 82 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

D. Asset management

33. **In paragraph 86 of its report, the Board, while noting the improvements made, recommended that the Administration undertake a more focused effort to ensure that its own instructions in respect of the write-off of assets are followed by missions.**

34. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 87 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Ongoing

35. **In paragraph 91 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration review the reasons for delay in the disposal of written-off assets and ensure that the missions explore the possibility of the quicker disposal of long-pending cases while addressing mission-specific constraints.**

36. The Department of Field Support and the missions have made substantial progress in the area of disposal by commercial sale, as demonstrated by the improved timeline of the process. The timelines for completed commercial sales (179 days) and pending commercial sales (123 days) are within the established departmental target of 180 days, with a 30-day tolerance period. During the 2013/14 financial period, the Department provided guidance to the field missions with a view to assessing local market conditions and exploring opportunities for the establishment of disposal agreements with local authorities and/or resorting to alternative disposal methods. Missions were further advised to engage all stakeholders in establishing a robust commercial sale regime for property disposal, conduct sales regularly to avoid accumulation of backlog and further improve disposal performance. The progress achieved was due to the guidance provided and close follow-up by the Department of Field Support. Further guidance to the missions will be provided in the Department's directive and work plan on property management for the 2015 calendar year.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

37. **In paragraph 97 of its report, the Board recommended that missions: (a) strengthen their asset management procedures and closely monitor the level of ageing stock and its judicious deployment and redistribution; (b) consider writing off or disposing of all items of obsolete equipment that are no longer in use; and (c) ensure proper assessment of requirements before undertaking procurement so as to ensure that the items purchased are utilized.**

38. At the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), a significant number of slow-moving items were stock from the previous mission that were earmarked for construction projects. Some of the projects were cancelled following the revision of the Mission's mandate. The assets are being reviewed on a quarterly

basis in accordance with the property management guidelines. The Asset Management Unit will continue to work with self-accounting units to expedite the redeployment of surplus items. Additional comments by the Administration are reflected in paragraph 98 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Ongoing

39. **In paragraph 101 of its report, the Board recommended that missions: (a) improve their procedures for the issuance and tracking of assets; and (b) exert more effort to trace the items "not located" during physical verification.**

40. The Administration would like to reiterate that items not physically verified at the time of reporting do not necessarily represent a loss or indicate any potential mismanagement. It should be acknowledged that the dynamic operational environment in which the missions are deployed, which involves frequent movement of staff and equipment, restrictions of movement, or, in many instances, hostile security conditions on the ground, does not always provide for easy access to sites where assets are located.

41. Continuous measures undertaken by the Department of Field Support have resulted in improvement of the physical accountability of non-expendable property, which consistently exceeded 99 per cent during the last two financial periods. Furthermore, the total number of items not located at the end of the year has been reduced over the years and represented a meagre 0.58 per cent of the total value of non-expendable property in peacekeeping operations as at 30 June 2014.

42. It is confirmed that most of the items are eventually located. The value of items that have been written off as actual loss during the 2013/14 financial period represented 0.16 per cent of the total holdings of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, which is an indication of effective internal controls, given the peacekeeping operating environment.

43. The Department of Field Support has defined key performance indicators in its directive and work plan on property management for the 2014 calendar year. The performance results have been systematically reviewed and reported by missions on a quarterly basis. The Department has reminded missions to step up the process of physical verification as a key measure for ensuring property record accuracy and plans to finalize this activity well ahead of the end of the financial year in order to allow sufficient time for review and reconciliation of discrepancies identified during the verification process. Furthermore, missions were requested to review and reconcile discrepancies in records of non-expendable property and to ensure that all items marked with the "not found yet" discrepancy are located or, when appropriate, written-off as lost within the established time frame. Efforts are in progress at the missions to locate items which have not yet been verified.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Ongoing

44. **In paragraph 108 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration review inventory management and practices at missions to reduce the number of overstocked items and ensure more rational stocking of items taking into account actual rates of consumption.**

45. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 109 of the Board's report. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is in the process of establishing stock levels.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

E. Procurement and contracting

46. **In paragraph 114 of its report, the Board recommended that a system for the monitoring of the timelines of the various stages of the procurement process be instituted to reduce or eliminate delays in procurement.**

47. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 115 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

48. **In paragraph 122 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that requisitions are sent to the Procurement Division in time, keeping in view the expiry of ongoing contracts, so that such contracts are not extended beyond their tenure.**

49. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 123 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

50. **In paragraph 129 of its report, the Board, while recognizing the need for some flexibility in seeking performance bonds, recommended that the Administration review the guidelines for obtaining such bonds to ensure that they are adequate to secure the interests of the United Nations and result in the consistent application of provisions.**

51. The Administration requests closure of this recommendation, since its content is already reflected in practice, as the Board observed. Specific guidelines to buyers and requisitioners on performance security are provided in the Procurement Manual (sect. 9.34). Vendors would incur additional costs for reissuing performance bonds,

which might be passed on to the Organization. In addition, vendors may ask for performance bond reductions as the "not-to-exceed" balance (and the Organization's risk exposure) on the contract decreases over time. In this regard, the Administration requests that the Board take into consideration the fact that the extension of a contract usually occurs at the end of the contract term, when the contract expenditures approaches the not-to-exceed value. In such situations, the existing performance bond normally adequately mitigates risk of the outstanding vendor obligation.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

52. **In paragraph 132 of its report, the Board recommended that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) review the control mechanisms in place to ensure that recoveries on account of liquidated damages and other contract-related breaches are effected in a timely manner.**

53. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 131 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

54. **In paragraph 139 of its report, the Board recommended that the missions: (a) develop a system that will enable them to capture and collect all types of discounts offered in the contract; and (b) ensure coordination between the different sections within the mission so that invoices are processed within the specified time frame to secure prompt payment discounts.**

55. The non-utilization of prompt payment discounts was mainly related to problems experienced during the deployment of Umoja at the missions. These issues were escalated to United Nations Headquarters and subsequently resolved. The missions are now taking advantage of prompt payment discounts, where applicable. The use of invoice due dates provided through Umoja has further facilitated the tracking of invoices with prompt payment discounts.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

56. **In paragraph 150 of its report, the Board recommended that the provisions in the Procurement Manual be reviewed to strengthen the role of the Local Committee on Contracts/Headquarters Committee on Contracts as an effective internal control mechanism and to ensure best value for money, accountability and transparency in procurement decisions.**

57. The Procurement Division actively reviews the provisions of the Procurement Manual, and, in the Administration's opinion, no additional guidance is required, as

the Procurement Manual clearly outlines the requirements for submission of cases to committees on contracts, whether locally or at Headquarters, as well as the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process (see also the Administration's comments in para. 132 below).

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

F. Regional Procurement Office

58. **In paragraph 156 of the report, the Administration accepted the Board's recommendation that: (a) the missing elements be incorporated in the joint acquisition plan; (b) definite target dates be set for finalization of the joint acquisition plan and, in any case, the plan be finalized before the start of the fiscal year; and (c) the annual planning process result in the preparation of mission-specific plans in addition to the joint acquisition plan.**

59. The Administration agrees with the recommendation and has implemented it as follows:

(a) **Missing elements in the joint acquisition plan.** The Regional Procurement Office is incorporating estimated quantities and delivery dates/timelines (as applicable), as well as target dates for the initiation and completion of procurement actions in compliance with the approved service level agreement, in the regional acquisition plan (previously known separately as the joint acquisition plan and mission-specific acquisition plans), which will include goods/services common to all missions as well as mission-specific requirements. In addition, the framework policy of the Regional Procurement Office was revised by the Regional Procurement Steering Group at its meeting on 15 September 2014 to incorporate additional instructions for developing the regional acquisition plan;

(b) **Target dates for finalization of the regional acquisition plan.** The Administration agrees that definite target dates for finalizing the regional acquisition plan should be set, and the plan should be finalized before the start of the fiscal year. The framework policy of the Regional Procurement Office was revised accordingly on 15 September 2014. The planning process starts with the preparation of individual mission acquisition plans based on their budget proposals. A draft plan is then developed and consolidated in January or February of each year by each Chief Procurement Officer and shared with senior management in missions and appropriate self-accounting units for their review and feedback. The plan is finalized, approved and signed by the Regional Procurement Steering Group in July of each year after issuance of the approved budget. The approval may be electronic (by e-mail) if a meeting of the Steering Group cannot be scheduled in July. Once approved, the regional acquisition plan is kept under review by the Steering Group. Any amendments, changes or additions must be approved by the Steering Group;

(c) **Mission-specific acquisition.** The draft acquisition plan will be prepared by the Chief Procurement Officers of the client missions, who have been designated as the mission's focal points for the Regional Procurement Office, in coordination with self-accounting units and senior management in the missions. A copy of the

revised framework policy for the Regional Procurement Office was provided to the Board for its information.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

60. **In paragraph 160 of its report, the Board recommended that the Procurement Division take concerted action to improve rates of utilization of the regional systems contracts by missions. Where there are such contracts, the missions should normally be prevailed upon to utilize them.**

61. The Procurement Division has undertaken a supporting role in order to improve the rates of utilization of the regional systems contracts by missions. During the course of the audit, the Board was informed of the following: (a) the Directors and Chiefs of Mission Support have issued instructions to their staff on actions to be taken by self-accounting units prior to raising shopping carts; (b) the utilization rates are provided to missions on a monthly basis and discussed at every meeting of the Regional Procurement Steering Group; (c) the regional systems contracts are put in place by the Regional Procurement Office based on forecast requirements provided by the missions; and (d) regional systems contracts, like global systems contracts, do not have any guarantee of minimum purchase and the regional systems contracts permit the contractors to deliver only after receipt of the purchase orders from the missions. The Procurement Division, in consultation with senior management in the Department of Field Support at Headquarters and in missions, continues to support efforts to increase utilization rates for the regional systems contracts by reducing the procurement lead times, promoting closer communication with missions and reducing delivery time.

62. The Administration requests closure of this recommendation.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

G. Vehicle fleet management

63. **In paragraph 168 of its report, the Board reiterated its recommendation that the Administration continue its efforts to eliminate excess holdings of light passenger vehicles.**

64. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 166 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

H. Fuel management

65. **In paragraph 172 of its report, the Board recommended that payment procedures be streamlined so that prompt payment discounts may be claimed. There should be strict timelines for the processing of fuel bills, coupled with robust mechanisms for the monitoring of those timelines.**

66. The Administration comments on this matter in paragraph 55 above.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

I. Air transportation

67. **In paragraph 176 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration closely monitor the implementation of the aviation information management system, not only at the three pilot missions, but subsequently across all missions, and obviate any further slippages.**

68. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 177 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

69. **In paragraph 181 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration carry out a trend analysis of the utilization of air resources by missions to determine the optimum size and composition of the aviation fleet required without compromising operational parameters.**

70. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 180 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

71. **In paragraph 183 of its report, the Board recommended that missions analyse flight needs and flight schedules to maximize passenger and cargo payload per flight in order to improve aircraft capacity utilization and efficiencies and thereby reduce costs with respect to air transport.**

72. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 184 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Third quarter of 2015

73. **In paragraph 189 of the report, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it: (a) ensure strict adherence to the time frames for sending requests so as to enable the planning of efficient and cost-effective flight options; and (b) ensure that a post-flight analysis checklist is provided to the Strategic Air Operations Centre for better future tasking.**

74. In accordance with the directive issued by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support in November 2009, requests for aviation support should be sent to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General at least 10 working days in advance of the proposed travel to allow for all operational and administrative planning to be undertaken in a systematic manner. A similar directive would be issued for senior management of the United Nations and other implementing parties for strict compliance.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: High
Target date: Second quarter of 2015

75. **In paragraph 194 of its report, the Board recommended that the Strategic Air Operations Centre undertake a thorough cost analysis of United Nations fleet operations to identify areas where efficiencies can be achieved.**

76. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 195 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Second quarter of 2015

J. Management of construction projects

77. **In paragraph 198 of its report, the Board recommended that the monitoring of construction projects be further strengthened and that missions be advised to submit their reports with all details so as to enable effective monitoring and redress of any impediments to the timely completion of the projects.**

78. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 199 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Third quarter of 2015

79. **In paragraph 211 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) missions strengthen their procedures for the planning and implementation of construction contracts to factor in all foreseeable environmental and security factors that may impinge upon the execution of the work; (b) a proper feasibility study be conducted and a detailed project report prepared before project timelines are proposed; and (c) completion dates be realistic and practical so as to avoid the possibility of slippage in the stipulated schedules.**

80. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraphs 202, 208, 210 and 212 of the Board's report. The Administration also points out that the implementation of the guidelines on the governance of major construction projects will improve construction project management in the missions.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

81. **In paragraph 221 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration conduct a review of current arrangements across peacekeeping missions to ensure consistent application of the requirements for performance security to protect the interests of the Organization.**

82. In accordance with paragraph 6 of section 9.34 of the Procurement Manual, security instruments are not required for all solicitations or contracts, and whether they are needed requires a careful assessment of the facts and circumstances of the procurement. In accordance with paragraph 7, the Procurement Officer should determine whether a security instrument is necessary. It should be noted that liquidated damages are intended to compensate for actual losses caused by any delay and not to serve as a penalty for delays or an incentive to ensure that the contractor performs on time. The enforceability of liquidated damages provisions depends on the facts and circumstances of the procurement action concerned and the substance and terms and conditions of the contract in question. The determination as to when and how to use liquidated damages provisions in United Nations contracts is complex and such clauses are not appropriate for all contracts.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

K. Quick-impact projects

83. **In paragraph 240 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) the implementation of quick-impact projects by field missions be periodically monitored by Headquarters to ensure that the missions adhere strictly to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support policies stipulating the size of individual projects and timelines for their approval and implementation, particularly after the release of the first instalment of payment to the implementing agency; (b) there be documented evaluation of the**

assessment of capacities and selection of implementing partners to carry out the projects; and (c) quick-impact project management teams consisting of properly trained and dedicated staff be constituted to manage the projects.

84. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations provides guidance on policy and good practices to missions in the implementation of quick-impact projects. Owing to capacity limitations at Headquarters, the individual missions are responsible for ensuring policy compliance, identifying and resolving bottlenecks, monitoring, and supporting the evaluation of impact and effectiveness. UNAMID has identified the risks relating to project implementation and developed risk mitigation measures to address delays in the implementation of quick-impact projects. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations shared a collection of lessons learned and best practices with UNAMID to support the Mission in establishing efficient procedures and practices that conform to the requirements of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support policy on quick-impact projects. The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) is improving its governance and practices for quick-impact projects by providing the required resources and training to the concerned staff. Additional comments are reflected in paragraph 241 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

L. Management of human resources

85. **In paragraph 247 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration monitor the progress of performance appraisals at all missions in accordance with the e-performance programme and monitor the performance of its staff against established performance parameters.**

86. The Department of Field Support monitors timely completion of performance appraisals by the missions. In particular, the Department has developed and implemented a monitoring framework that includes two e-performance campaigns aimed at the monitoring of compliance and the timely completion of midterm and end-of-cycle reviews. Such monitoring campaigns involve regular communication with the missions, including the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia, on the overall compliance ratio for both the midterm and end-of-cycle reviews, in addition to a detailed annual report on the status of each staff member in the process of performance appraisal. With this report, the missions can proactively follow up with staff members and first reporting officers to conclude the performance appraisal in a timely manner. Completion of performance appraisals has also been included in the senior managers' compacts, and the heads of missions are accountable for ensuring compliance.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

87. **In paragraph 250 of its report, the Board recommended that the UNAMID conduct a review of the use of individual contractors, focusing on duties overlapping with those of regular staff, and rationalize their utilization.**

88. As earlier indicated to the Board, UNAMID had reduced the number of individual contractors from 3,300 as at July 2013 to 1,600 as at July 2014. A further reduction to 1,391 had been achieved as at 31 December 2014. The international individual contractors have been reduced from 29 in August 2014 to zero as at 31 December 2014. The Mission is also considering the possibility of outsourcing cleaning works, for which the majority of individual contractors are hired.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

M. Implementation of the global field support strategy

89. **In paragraph 261 of its report, the Board recommended that regular meetings be held to ensure that the implementation of the global field support strategy is on track, given that 2015 is the last year of the implementation of the global strategy.**

90. The Global Field Support Strategy Steering Committee remains an important body for providing advice and recommendations in support of the direction and execution of the strategy by senior management of the Department of Field Support. The Department agrees that regular meetings of the Steering Committee should be held at critical junctures in the remaining period of implementation. The most recent Steering Committee meeting was held in November 2014 in advance of the preparation of the fifth annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the global field support strategy (A/69/651). Regular Steering Committee meetings will be held for the remainder of the implementation period.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

91. **In paragraph 273 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration take all steps necessary to ensure that the activities planned under the global field support strategy are completed by June 2015 so that the end-state vision and key performance indicators are fully achieved. An important element of such an effort would be effective periodic monitoring of progress achieved. The initiatives rolled out under the strategy should be mainstreamed into the work of the Department of Field Support at the earliest in order to ensure that the momentum achieved is not lost.**

92. The Department of Field Support is fully committed to the mainstreaming of the global field support strategy initiatives, benefits and tools into the ongoing strategic management of the Department beyond the strategy period. Some strategic change initiatives that have been developed, such as the standardized funding

model, will continue to be refined after the strategy period. Those initiatives will need to be mainstreamed into the business processes of the Department. Other initiatives, such as supply chain management and the expansion of shared services or the development of a business analytics framework, which have emerged during the latter stages of the global field support strategy period, will be rolled out and implemented after June 2015.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

93. **In paragraph 279 of its report, the Board recommended that communication efforts at all peacekeeping missions and special political missions be redoubled to ensure and embed the success of the global field support strategy.**

94. The Department of Field Support agrees that communication is an integral and vital component of any change initiative and supports the recommendation to improve communication efforts as part of the global field support strategy, but also of any future strategic change initiatives. Quarterly updates are ongoing and an effort is under way to further develop an online platform to enhance communications across the field and provide access to relevant information links. Additional communication products and presentations have been developed and disseminated. The global field support strategy is a regular topic of communication with field missions through monthly video and telephone conferences with all Directors and/or Chiefs of Mission Support.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

95. **In paragraph 284 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration work out a strategy to ensure that the elements and tools of the standardized funding model are invariably used for first-year budget formulation to ensure that newly mandated missions are able to gain access to the necessary resources without any delay and rapidly mobilize to initiate operational implementation.**

96. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 285 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

97. **In paragraph 291 of its report, the Board recommended that the resource efficiency group be reconstituted, with a clearly defined role and responsibilities complementing the other structures already in place in a mutually reinforcing**

manner, to ensure the regular review of efficiency measures across the field in order to incorporate practical benefits and savings under the global field support strategy.

98. The important element of this recommendation appears to be the fulfilment of the purposes/functions of the resource efficiency group rather than the establishment of a reconstituted body. The Department of Field Support wishes to clarify that it does not have a substantive concern with regard to the recommendation that the group should be reconstituted. The Department reiterates that the function that the group was initially established to carry out is being pursued through multiple other processes, namely, the strategic budget review process and the civilian staffing review process. The average cost per uniformed personnel deployed has fallen consistently over the last five years, which provides clear evidence that the Department is actively seeking and implementing efficiencies. By strengthening the group's focus on business analytics in the future, its function (as opposed to its form) will continue to improve. In addition, those other processes/forums have a similar membership. Accordingly, in reconstituting the group, the roles and responsibilities must be clear, in order to reinforce the resource stewardship framework and not to detract from it. The Department of Field Support will initiate reconstitution of group, or charge another review body with the same cross-cutting responsibilities.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

99. **In paragraph 297 of its report, the Board recommended that the activities identified under the succession management plan be reviewed and revised target dates set for their completion. They may thereafter be strictly monitored to obviate the possibility of any further slippages.**

100. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 298 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

101. **In paragraph 302 of the report, the Administration concurred with the Board's recommendation that steps be taken to build on the initiatives under way to bridge the civilian gender gap by adding to the recruitment and representation of women at all levels, with an emphasis at senior levels.**

102. A senior women talent pipeline initiative was launched in February 2014 to increase the number of external senior-level women who apply for D-1 and D-2 positions in field missions. This led to a 20 per cent increase in the number of external women applicants to specific vacancies at the D-1 and D-2 levels. The Department of Field Support will re-open the pipeline to target female French and Arabic speakers who can be considered as candidates to fill remaining critical gaps. Additional analysis is being conducted to determine the causes for the failure to

retain women and there are efforts to obtain additional resources to support women staff at the P-5 and D-1 levels.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

103. **In paragraph 306 of its report, the Board recommended that action be taken in a time-bound manner to include a performance indicator to track the geographic deployment of staff at field missions.**

104. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 307 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

105. **In paragraph 312 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the activities under the customer service integration plan are completed in a time-bound manner and that there are no further slippages, so as to ensure that the end-state vision is achieved as envisaged.**

106. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 311 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

107. **In paragraph 320 of its report, the Board recommended that steps be taken to set up a vision, strategy and road map for supply chain reforms at the earliest and ensure the implementation of supply chain reforms in support of peacekeeping operations. This should include a plan to ensure the mainstreaming of the supply chain reforms into the business processes of the Department of Field Support, its regional centres and field missions, even after the conclusion of the global field support strategy in June 2015.**

108. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 321 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

109. **In paragraph 324 of its report, the Board recommended that the Department of Field Support establish a mechanism to monitor compliance with the requirement of obtaining clearance from the Global Service Centre by**

the missions prior to sourcing non-expendable assets. There should be clear binding instructions to ensure adherence to the policy of sourcing non-expendable assets only after obtaining clearance from the Centre.

110. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 325 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

111. **In paragraph 330 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) the modularization strategic action plan be finalized and approved at the earliest; and (b) the Global Service Centre engage mission leaders on a possible modularization requirement to address the risk of lack of client demand for modules.**

112. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 331 of the Board's report. In addition, the Global Service Centre confirmed that as at 31 December 2014 the additional content on modularization had been added to the Centre's intranet site.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

113. **In paragraph 337 of its report, the Board recommended that the enabling capacities project be expedited to ensure that service packages can be seamlessly implemented in the field and help in the rapid deployment of modularized camps.**

114. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 336 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

115. **In paragraph 340 of the report, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that the Global Service Centre enter into service level agreements with the missions to which it is providing services and develop operational key performance indicators for the service lines as well as corporate key performance indicators for shared services.**

116. The Global Service Centre has forwarded the draft service level agreements to each of the client missions to which it provides finance, human resources and procurement support for comment. The Global Service Centre is preparing the key performance indicators for administrative services.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

117. **In paragraph 345 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) major construction projects be closely monitored and the contractual terms, including liquidated damages, enforced in the event of unjustified delay; (b) the Administration ensure greater accuracy and transparency in publishing the results of surveys relating to client satisfaction so that they can better serve the intended purpose as indicators for remedial action and (c) a standard operating procedure be developed for compilation and analysis of data for each key performance indicator.**

118. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has implemented regular monitoring procedures for the three construction projects. Other comments of the Administration are reflected in paragraph 344 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

119. **In paragraph 348 of its report, the Board recommended that the Regional Service Centre carry out an analysis to ascertain the reasons for the low payloads with a view to ascertaining whether there needs to be any change in the deployment of the aircraft to enable their better utilization.**

120. The Administration reiterates that this recommendation has been overtaken by events because the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre is no longer tasking the two aircraft.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

121. **In paragraph 352 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) all functions be expeditiously transferred from the missions to the Regional Service Centre as envisaged in the service level agreements and that the Centre initiate necessary action to complete the transition phase by June 2015; and (b) that the Regional Service Centre initiate action to define key performance indicators that cover the entire process of work, including the work to be performed by the missions.**

122. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 353 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Second quarter of 2015

123. **In paragraph 358 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration explore mechanisms to provide remote access to onboarding staff at the missions to enable them to complete formalities, thereby obviating the necessity of their visiting the Regional Service Centre. Until such time as check-in/check-out services are provided from the Centre, it should report the expenditure incurred on daily subsistence allowance/mission subsistence allowance of the checking-in and checking-out personnel.**

124. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 359 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Third quarter of 2015

N. Information and communications technology resources in peacekeeping operations

125. **In paragraph 367 of its report, the Board recommended that the Administration carry out an analysis to identify the main factors leading to such wide variations between allocations and expenditure in order to strengthen budgetary formulation and control mechanisms.**

126. This recommendation is addressed through the performance reports that are issued by missions at the end of each fiscal period. All variations in expenditure necessitated by changes in operational requirements are reported to the General Assembly. Additional comments are reflected in paragraph 366 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: Implemented
Priority: Medium
Target date: Not applicable

127. **In paragraph 373 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) proposals for standards be evaluated in an empirical manner by clearly defining the operational requirements to be fulfilled; (b) in finalizing standards, market research be carried out with emphasis on the solution or benefit to be achieved; and (c) competitive bidding be the first line of approach in the larger interest of transparency in the Organization.**

128. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 374 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

129. **In paragraph 376 of its report, the Board recommended that a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis be undertaken in adopting new standards or replacing old ones and that the standards be reflected in the business case proposing the change.**

130. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 377 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

131. **In paragraph 387 of its report, the Board reiterated its recommendation in paragraph 150 of its report, which emphasized the need to strengthen the role of the Headquarters Committee on Contracts.**

132. The Administration does not accept the recommendation, as the recommendation of the Headquarters Committee on Contracts was followed to the letter and spirit. As previously indicated, at no time was the Headquarters Committee on Contracts or any of the internal controls circumvented. Moreover, the following facts are reiterated:

(a) The Board's report fails to acknowledge that the Director of the Procurement Division has the authority to decide if an amendment would significantly affect the procurement process that led to the original contract award. In fact, in paragraph 1 (e) of section 12.3 of the Procurement Manual it is stated that the recommendation of the Headquarters Committee on Contracts and the approval of the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services shall be obtained prior to any contractual commitment being made on any proposed amendment or modification of a contract previously reviewed by the Headquarters Committee on Contracts, where, *in the judgement of the Director of the Procurement Division or Chief Procurement Officer*, such amendment would significantly affect the procurement process that led to the original contract award, the criteria on which the original award was made, or the original contractual terms. The Committee shall review such proposed modification with reference to the criteria on which the original award was approved (emphasis added);

(b) In paragraph 385 of its report, the Board fails to recognize that, by conducting a competitive bidding process, the concern of the Headquarters Committee on Contracts was fully addressed, and the continuation of services in the meantime was required. Management also reiterates that extensions were made under the authority given to the Director of the Procurement Division by the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services;

(c) The Headquarters Committee on Contracts was created to ensure that the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services makes informed decisions taking into account Committee recommendations. A "strengthening" of the role of the Committee beyond its advisory role would weaken the accountability of the Assistant Secretary-General under the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

133. **In paragraph 389 of the report, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it explore the possibility of shifting, fully or partially, the risk and responsibility of the supply of information and communications technology (ICT) equipment to the vendor by stipulating the delivery locations at the user missions after undertaking a cost-benefit analysis of such alternative arrangements.**

134. The Department of Field Support will continue to coordinate with the Procurement Division to implement the recommendation.

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2016

135. **In paragraph 395 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) the procedures for the utilization of ICT assets, including the determination of whether the procurement was necessary in the first place, be reviewed so as to eliminate such prolonged delays in utilization; and (b) guidelines be formulated on the extent of redundancy required for leased bandwidth.**

136. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraphs 392 and 396 of the Board's report. It should be noted, however, that in some cases ICT equipment is purchased and maintained in stock as "critical spares" for equipment already in use. As such, these stock items are held for longer periods.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

137. **In paragraph 401 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) the staffing requirements of each mission be reviewed to ensure that the number of staff engaged is commensurate with its requirements; and (b) a separate budget line be introduced to indicate the resource allocations and expenditure in the budgets of missions and those of the Regional Service Centre and the Global Service Centre for the deployment of contractors, as is done with respect to consultants.**

138. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 402 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

139. **In paragraph 417 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) the Administration develop a comprehensive information security policy that includes detailed protocols that should be followed by missions and user units to secure the information technology assets; (b) a concerted awareness drive be undertaken to sensitize users with regard to threats to information security and the basic steps that should be adopted by all for cyberhygiene; (c) missions develop and implement formal information security incident management programmes delineating clearly the roles and responsibilities of ICT security personnel; and (d) the Administration explore the setting-up of an organization-wide computer emergency response team to coordinate and respond to cyberincidents and cyberthreats and carry out real-time analysis in order to develop defensive measures to secure United Nations information assets, resources and data.**

140. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 418 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2016

141. **In paragraph 423 of its report, the Board recommended that: (a) business continuity plans and disaster recovery plans be updated periodically after an in-depth re-assessment of threats and vulnerabilities; (b) each mission carry out risk assessments of all its critical ICT assets and formulate a robust risk management plan, which should be incorporated in its disaster recovery plan and business continuity plan; (c) missions carry out periodic tests so that the efficacy of their plans to handle emergency situations can be ensured; and (d) missions formulate a systematic schedule of awareness and training programmes for key staff handling the disaster recovery plan and business continuity plan in order to produce a reliable resource base to deal effectively with disaster or disaster-like situations.**

142. The Administration's comments are reflected in paragraph 424 of the Board's report.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

III. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2013

143. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 68/19 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide, in his next report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning the United Nations peacekeeping operations, a full explanation for the delays in the implementation of all outstanding recommendations of the Board, the root causes of the recurring issues and the measures to be taken.

144. In annex II to its report for the period ended 30 June 2014 (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board provided a summary of the status of implementation of the 49 recommendations from the previous financial period. Of the 49 recommendations, 7 had been overtaken by events, 25 had been fully implemented by the Administration and 17 were in progress at the time the Board issued its report for the period ended 30 June 2014. Information on the 17 recommendations that were in progress is provided below, in the order in which the recommendations were presented in the report of the Board for the period ended 30 June 2013 (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

145. Table 3 provides a detailed analysis of the status of implementation, as at February 2015, of the 17 recommendations that were assessed by the Board to be in progress.

Table 3
Status of implementation of outstanding previous recommendations as at February 2015

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support	12	–	4	8	7	1
Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support and Department of Management	1	–	–	1	1	–
Department of Management	4	–	–	4	3	1
Total	**17**	**–**	**4**	**13**	**11**	**2**

146. It should be noted that, of the 17 recommendations that were in progress (see A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II, annex II), 4 recommendations were subsequently implemented as at February 2015. Of the 13 recommendations that remain in progress, 11 are targeted for implementation before the end of 2015. The two recommendations without target dates pertain to ongoing activities.

147. **In paragraph 26 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration: (a) expedite the write-off process for**

assets left in the liquidated missions and achieve full disposal by the end of financial year 2013/14; and (b) enhance the management of transferred assets by promptly identifying the entity responsible for loss or damage during transfer-out and transfer-in delivery.

148. The Board confirmed in annex II to its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II) that part (a) of the recommendation had been implemented.

149. With regard to part (b) of the recommendation, it was noted in paragraph 27 of the Board's report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II) that the Administration had stated that it had fully reconciled the non-expendable property items transferred from the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and that there were no items pending acknowledgement by receiving missions. The details on the final disposition of the assets of UNMIS and MINURCAT are reflected in documents A/68/709 and Corr.1 and A/69/596 respectively.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

150. **In paragraph 39 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Procurement Division establish a mechanism to enable all registered vendors to have the opportunity to bid at some point in the interest of fairness and transparency.**

151. The Administration's comments are reflected in annex II to the Board's report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	First quarter of 2015

152. **In paragraph 42 of the report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Administration accepted the Board's recommendation that it: (a) optimize the availability of prompt payment discount rates during contract negotiations; and (b) establish a mechanism to monitor the implementation of such discounts.**

153. In annex II to its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board confirmed that part (a) of the recommendation had been implemented.

154. With regard to part (b) of the recommendation, the Administration comments on the matter in paragraph 55 above.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

155. **In paragraph 44 of the Board's report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Procurement Division accepted the Board's recommendation that it enhance**

the collection of contractor performance reports, and make better use of the information, to facilitate decision-making in contract awards or extensions.

156. The Administration reaffirms the comments it made in paragraph 27 of the previous report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board (A/68/751).

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

157. **In paragraph 62 of the Board's report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it define a consistent and more robust evaluation method for assessing the cost-effectiveness of the Regional Procurement Office.**

158. The cost-benefit analysis for the Regional Procurement Office is under review considering its dependency on the implementation of Umoja, which is expected to be implemented by 31 December 2015.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2015

159. **In paragraph 82 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II) chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen its monitoring of the status of the allotment of missions and ensure that proper approval is obtained before redeployments are made between groups and classes.**

160. The Administration's comments are reflected in annex II to the Board's report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

161. **In paragraph 93 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Department of Field Support and the Office of Human Resources Management develop a national staff recruitment standard operating procedure and establish how they will monitor and enforce mission compliance.**

162. The Administration's comments are reflected in annex II to the Board's report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

Departments responsible:	Department of Management, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

163. **In paragraph 110 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen aviation management by improving the link between planning assumptions, operational requirements and contractual/budgeting processes based on the development of an effective performance measurement framework.**

164. The aviation information management system is currently operational in MONUSCO, UNISFA and UNMISS. The system will be rolled out progressively to the remaining missions during the first half of 2015.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

165. **In paragraph 114 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) establish strategic fuel reserves as soon as possible to support the mission mandates.**

166. A new fuel requirement at UNOCI is being finalized, after which stock of fuel will be held at the established levels. In UNDOF, the standard operating procedure has been amended taking the prevailing circumstances into consideration.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2015

167. **In paragraph 117 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration enhance the effectiveness of monitoring of fuel consumption through trend analysis, systematic reporting of abnormal consumption, prompt corrective and disciplinary action against suspected fraud and the promotion of monitoring tools such as the electronic fuel management system.**

168. The electronic fuel management system has been implemented at MINUSMA, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, UNMISS, and UNOCI. The system will be rolled out to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti during the 2014/15 financial period.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

169. **In paragraph 121 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration enhance the role of the Fuel Operation Unit in fuel fraud prevention.**

170. With the ongoing implementation of the electronic fuel management system, missions are able to detect abnormal consumption in a timely manner, and all such cases are initially referred to the concerned self-accounting unit for review. Unresolved cases are then referred to the security investigations units for action as appropriate.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

171. **In paragraph 122 of its report A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration encourage the Fuel Working Group to start communication activities as soon as possible and establish a similar coordination mechanism within fuel-related units at missions.**

172. The Administration comments on this matter in paragraph 170 above.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

173. **In paragraph 141 of the Board's report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it develop a more systematic approach for missions to draw on when implementing global field support strategy tools and principles. This will include a plan on how such tools and principles will be deployed in missions after the five-year project duration.**

174. The Administration is currently preparing guidance that will ensure the sustainment of the global field support strategy beyond 1 July 2015. A detailed report on this guidance will be included in the final progress report on the implementation of the strategy.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

175. **In paragraph 176 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration conduct a wider review and present a business case on whether the Regional Service Centre is the optimal location to take over civilian predeployment training, and develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the transfer if considered viable.**

176. A comprehensive review of predeployment training for civilian staff is under way in order to look into the learning activities to be undertaken by staff deploying to missions, including the modality of its delivery and how best to adapt its content to various audiences. In the review, consideration is also being given to the viability of delivering the face-to-face component of the global training programme at some locations on the basis of criteria such as cost, expertise and infrastructure on site.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Second quarter of 2015

177. **In paragraph 195 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration expedite the development of the remaining seven modules and the associated procurement strategy for enabling capacity within the one and a half years left for the global field support strategy to be implemented, so that capability for rapid mission deployment is fully achieved as soon as possible.**

178. The Administration has completed the design of three of the five service packages (50-, 200- and 1,000-person camps) and is finalizing the design of the remaining two service packages (logistics base and air base). The Administration issued a request for expression of interest associated with the construction of a 200-person camp.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: High
Target date: Second quarter of 2015

179. **In paragraph 204 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration, drawing on lessons from the project management of the global field support strategy, address deficiencies in the management of the supply chain reform. In particular, the Administration should establish effective project governance and a dedicated team and formalize the concept document so that each party can clearly understand the vision, project timeline, roles and responsibilities, and can accept its accountability for delivery.**

180. A cross-functional team chaired by the Director of the Logistics Support Division has been formed with representatives from various functional areas, including the Logistics Support Division, the Global Service Centre, the Field Personnel Division, the Field Budget and Finance Division, the Information and Communications Technology Division, the global field support strategy implementation coordination team, the Umoja team and the Procurement Division. The cross-functional team is responsible for finalizing and formalizing the concept document to give clear ideas about a vision, strategy and road map for the implementation of supply chain management. The Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre at the Regional Service Centre and the Integrated Operational Team have been identified as client representatives for this initiative.

Departments responsible: Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status: In progress
Priority: Medium
Target date: Third quarter of 2015

181. **In paragraph 209 of its report (A/68/5 (Vol. II), chap. II), the Board recommended that the Administration address the identified deficiencies in acquisition planning and global asset management.**

182. The Global Service Centre is responsible for the "clearing-house" functions of global asset management at peacekeeping operations. A revision of the asset management policy is under way in order to establish a new threshold for the acquisition of assets, taking into account the lessons learned. The Centre is working closely with the field procurement liaison team of the Department of Field Support to mainstream the acquisition planning process into global asset management.

Departments responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2015

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Agenda item 44
Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Note verbale dated 11 February 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations, in its capacity as President Pro Tempore of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), has the honour to request, on behalf of one of its members, that the document entitled "Special declaration on the question of the Malvinas Islands", adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered at the third CELAC Summit, held in Belén, Costa Rica, on 28 and 29 January 2015, be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 44, concerning the question of the Malvinas Islands (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 11 February 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Special declaration on the question of the Malvinas Islands

The Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Costa Rica on the occasion of the third Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held on 28 and 29 January 2015,

1. Reiterate their strongest support for the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, as well as the abiding interest of the countries of the region in the resumption of negotiations between the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in order to find, as soon as possible, a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute, pursuant to the relevant pronouncements by the United Nations and the Organization of American States, as expressed by them in the previous declarations of the Rio Group and the Latin American and Caribbean Summit on Integration and Development, in particular the Declaration of the Latin American and Caribbean Unity Summit, held in Riviera Maya, Mexico, on 23 February 2010, which are part of the historical heritage of CELAC;

2. Recall that 16 December 2015 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of United Nations General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX), which was the first to refer specifically to the question of the Malvinas Islands and which has been reiterated up to the present day by successive resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Special Committee on decolonization. Furthermore, they note with satisfaction the important contribution made by the United Nations Special Committee on decolonization through its consideration of the question over the 50 years since the adoption of resolution 2065 (XX);

3. In this context, the Heads of State and Government of CELAC instruct the President Pro Tempore to request the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, to renew his efforts to carry out the mission of good offices entrusted to him by the General Assembly through successive resolutions, with a view to achieving the resumption of negotiations aimed at finding, as soon as possible, a peaceful solution to the above-mentioned dispute, and to inform them of the progress made in the fulfilment of that mission;

4. Furthermore, they reiterate the importance of observing United Nations General Assembly resolution 31/49, which calls upon the two parties to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation while the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas are going through the process recommended by the General Assembly;

5. They highlight the continuous constructive attitude and willingness of the Argentine Government to reach, by means of negotiations, a peaceful and definitive solution to this anachronistic colonial situation on the soil of the Americas.